



Brainerd Housing & Redevelopment Authority
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 23, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in and for the City of Brainerd, Minnesota, was held via Webex video/teleconference at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 23rd, 2020.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Marlee Larson called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Board members present via remote video conference include Commissioners Marlee Larson, Patrick Wussow, Bekah Kent, and Gabe Johnson. Executive Director Eric Charpentier, Finance Director Karen Young, Executive Assistant LeAnn Goltz, Rental Assistance Manager Tania Eller, Housing Rehab Coordinator John Schommer, and Housing Manager Shannon Fortune were also present. Absent: Ashley Storm.
3. **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Wussow moved to approve the minutes from the meeting on August 26, 2020. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Through roll call vote, all commissioners were in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.
4. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Nothing to report.
5. **NEW BUSINESS:** Nothing to report.
6. **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**
 - a. **Financial Report:**

Anderson Brothers Payment
The first pay application in the amount of \$139,709.80 was processed in August for the Anderson Brothers project for Public Housing. The funds were drawn out of the 2018 Capital Fund Program (CFP) grant.

Destination Downtown Brainerd Coalition (DDBC)
The first set of banners were installed on September 15th and the cigarette receptacles have arrived and are awaiting stickers before installation. The holiday banners are in the design process. Per the contract with DDBC, upon fulfillment of the installation of decorative light post banners and cigarette recycling containers, the HRA will pay the professional fee of \$5,000.

CWC HRA Budget

Since the 2021 budget for CWC HRA requested a level levy request of \$729,500, it was not necessary to be on the agenda for the September 10th CWC budget committee meeting. The CWC commissioners set the preliminary 2021 levy at their September 22nd meeting. This included the CWC HRA levy request and historically has been considered final with the action taken at this meeting.

CARES Act Funding

Reflected in the August HCV financials is an additional \$46,667 in CARES Act funding for a total of \$84,999 deposited for HCV. HUD requested that we draw down the \$42,091 in CARES Act funding for Public Housing. This was drawn down and will be reflected in the September financials. HUD recently released Notice PIH-2020-24 extending the period of availability for CARES Act funding to December 31st, 2021, for the expenditure of the funds.

Moved by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Kent to approve the payments as presented. Through roll call vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

b. HCV/Section 8:

HCV Program Report

The Unit Months Leased (UML) through August was 97% and HAP utilization was 65%. The decrease in UML is due to the addition of FYI vouchers to our allocation.

2021 FMRs

FY 2021 Fair Market Rents (FMRs) have been published. Payment standards are required to fall between 90 and 110 percent of the FMRs. Last year, the payment standards were set at 94 percent or higher of the FMRs. This year, the FMRs decreased and the payment standards now fall between 97 and 99 percent, so staff does not recommend a change to them.

HQS Inspections

In August, staff decided to start performing in-person inspections on new, vacant units. If the process goes well, they will start performing them on tenant-occupied units.

Bridges Program Report

There are eight families on our program with a monthly HAP payment of \$3,833. Four families have been issued a voucher and staff is working on leasing them up.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Report

There are currently 29 families on the program. Nine families are currently escrowing in the amount of \$1,237 per month.

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Report

There are three families leased up with a total HAP payment of \$1,110 per month. On August 27th, 2020, staff sent a request to HUD for three more families.

c. Housing Manager Report: Fortune reviewed the Vacancy Report and Property Performance Report for August 2020.

Ongoing COVID-19 Response

Glass sections have been installed at the reception counter in preparation for the next phases of re-opening, which are expected to develop over the next couple of months. Staff continues to ask about exposure and potential virus symptoms prior to entering units for work orders and all staff members continue to utilize face coverings when around others or in common spaces. Tenants have adapted well to providing requested information in contactless options currently available (i.e. phone, email, fax, mail, drop box). Staff has participated in training calls related to the CDC Eviction Halt order, although as the MN Peacetime Emergency Order has been extended through October 12, 2020, that is the Order guiding our current limitations on terminations. If the MN Peacetime Order were allowed to expire prior to December 31, 2020, then the protections of the CDC Order would be in effect

Public Housing Physical Updates

- North Star Retaining Wall: This project is now complete.
- Scattered Site Kitchen Remodeling: Scattered Site unit inspections have been pushed to October, during which time Terry will evaluate each kitchen to identify those that are highest priority for work that will begin in 2021.

Brainerd South

The second affected unit is completed and the tenant moved back in, which concludes the interior work. The emergency exterior work is complete and the final components of additional concrete work, window flashing, and landscaping will now proceed as it was determined that it will not be an insurance-paid expense and HUD's approval is not necessary.

Resident Commissioner Election Plan

Election day for the resident commissioner position is scheduled for September 30th, 2020, from 7AM to 7PM. All Section 8 participants and Public Housing residents were mailed flyers notifying them of the date and options for voting. To maintain public and staff safety, a hybrid voting model will be used that incorporates distance voting options such as phone, email, and drop box. To ensure that each household only votes once, staff will verify identity prior to accepting votes. All votes will remain confidential. The candidate statements were compiled into a document that is posted on the Brainerd HRA website, and will be available via email or mail or delivery, by calling either the main office or the ROSS service coordinator's office. Votes will be tallied the following morning (to allow for any missed calls to be returned) and the results will be posted on the website hopefully by later that afternoon.

ROSS Program Updates

- Erik currently has 13 active participants in the ROSS program. There was one newly enrolled participant this month and two new contacts with non-enrolled residents for more limited resource/referral work. To facilitate non-contact communication, he has been posting themed resources and information on the community bulletin board. The theme this month was heart health. The hope is that this posted information will provide an opportunity to share new and interesting information with residents without putting them at risk due to congregating.
- In addition to continuing to work with the Crosby HRA tenant activities coordinator to help launch the Senior Nutrition Food Program at the Crosby HRA, Erik has also been working on drafting a ROSS Program Action Plan using a model purchased from Nan McKay for guidance.

- He participated in a webcast related to geriatric depression and attended an in-person training on communicable disease.
- The Senior Nutrition Assistance program had 28 residents participating this past month. Still no nutrition seminars and deliveries continue to be made directly to the apartments to prevent tenants from congregating.
 - Facebook Stats:
 - » Erik made five new posts on the ROSS Facebook page this past month that focused on heart health and diet/exercise tips, a reminder of the Pop-Up Pantry date, a link to a geriatric depression webcast, and a link to information from the MN Dept. of Public Safety on free State ID's for individuals with disabilities.
 - » The posts reached 20 individuals but received no additional likes or shares.

d. Executive Director Report:

Employee Appreciation Lunch

In lieu of the City of Brainerd's annual employee appreciation picnic that previously had been held at Lum Park, the wellness team provided boxed lunches for each department on Wednesday, September 16th. Brainerd staff was able to celebrate out on the lawn and enjoy lunch. There were also years of service awards presented to Shannon Fortune (three years), LeAnn Goltz and Kathy Segler (five years each) each received a certificate.

Introduction to Brainerd City Council

On Monday, September 21st, Charpentier presented the HRA's 2021 levy request to the Brainerd City Council as well as gave a short introduction of himself and his new role. The same evening the preliminary levy was accepted by the Council.

Minnesota Housing Partnership Technical Assistance Grant

Representatives from MHP have reached out to staff to set up the first meeting to map out a work plan for the technical assistance grant. This meeting is set for Friday, September 25th.

Announcement of New Executive Director

Per the Board's request, staff sent a news release announcing Charpentier's new role to the Brainerd Dispatch and they published it on September 16th. In addition, Goltz sent an email announcement to approximately 130 contacts and community partners.

Future Board Meeting Discussion

Crow Wing County and the City of Brainerd have recently moved back to in-person meetings. Charpentier asked the Board if that was something they wanted to consider. They had a discussion and all commissioners preferred meeting in person over virtual methods. Meeting locations were discussed and Commissioner Johnson suggested checking to see if it is possible to use the Council Chambers in City Hall. Charpentier will check with City Administrator Bergman. The Board and staff agreed to tentatively plan on meeting in person starting next month.

- e. Rehab Update:** Schommer provided an update on current rehab projects including the SCDP grants in NE Brainerd and the City of Emily as well as several MHFA grants. In addition, he reported on the progress of Brainerd Oaks, Serene Pines, and Dalmar Estates. More than half of those lots have been sold to the developer and he anticipates more yet this year.

7. **Commissioner Comments:** Nothing to report.

8. **Adjournment:**

Moved by Commissioner Wussow and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 1:36 p.m. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Charpentier
Executive Director